

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend the claims as shown. Applicants reserve the right to pursue any cancelled claims at a later date.

1.-13 (canceled)

14. (new) A subscriber-line circuit for a communication system, comprising:  
a subscriber-side interface that connects to a subscriber terminal;  
a network-side interface that connects to a communication system having a packet network;  
a plurality of protocol stacks for communicating with a plurality of network elements within the communication system; and  
a converter that converts information received by the network-side interface from a network-side protocol to a subscriber-side protocol and converts information received by the subscriber-side interface from the subscriber-side protocol to the network-side protocol.

15. (new) The circuit according to claim 14, wherein the circuit is automatically linked to the network elements.

16. (new) The circuit according to claim 15, wherein the circuit is automatically linked during a boot of the circuit.

17. (new) The circuit according to claim 14, wherein the circuit is manually linked to the network elements.

18. (new) The circuit according to claim 14,  
wherein the subscriber terminal is a Time Division Multiplex (TDM) terminal or  
wherein the subscriber terminal is a Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) terminal.

19. (new) The circuit according to claim 18, wherein the circuit provides for terminating modem connections.

20. (new) The circuit according to claim 18, wherein the subscriber-side communication provides a voice coding transmission of A-law or  $\mu$ -law.

21. (new) The circuit according to claim 20, wherein the subscriber-side interface transmits tones and/or announcements.

22. (new) The circuit according to claim 21, wherein the subscriber-side interface receives tones.

23. (new) The circuit according to claim 18, wherein the subscriber-side interface transmits tones and/or announcements.

24. (new) The circuit according to claim 18, wherein the subscriber-side interface receives tones.

25. (new) The circuit according to claim 18, wherein the network-side interface is an Ethernet interface.

26. (new) A communication system having a plurality of network elements that provide services for subscriber terminals and having a subscriber-line circuit for coupling the subscriber terminal to the communication system, comprising:

a packet-based network that connects the subscriber line circuit to the network elements;  
a plurality of protocol stacks within the circuit for communicating to the network elements; and

a converter that converts information received by the network-side interface from a network-side protocol to a subscriber-side protocol and converts information received by the subscriber-side interface from the subscriber-side protocol to the network-side protocol.

27. (new) The communication system according to claim 26, wherein the packet-based network is coupled to a switching center of a circuit-switched telephone network via at least one of the network elements.

28. (new) The communication system according to claim 27, wherein the packet based-network is an access network.

29. (new) The communication system according to claim 26, wherein a network element is selected from the group consisting of: gatekeeper, proxy server for Voice-over-Internet Protocol (VoIP), access controllers, routers for accessing the packet-based communication network, and authentication devices.

30. (new) The communication system according to claim 29, wherein the packet based-network is an access network.

31. (new) The communication system according to claim 26, wherein the packet based-network is an access network.

32. (new) The communication system according to claim 26, wherein the packet based-network is an internet.